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ABSTRACT

In this play, aliens from a distant galaxy visit an Earth site in three time periods, observing people as they deal with the environment. The aliens bring their wisdom and vision of the future to show children of the present what to do to avoid a grim fate. The lessons are suitable for grades 3-6, and include from 18-32 speaking parts plus cues for sound, music, and lighting effects. Suggestions for props, sound, lighting effects, and costumes are included with the dialogue. (CW)

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ED315282

THE CHOICE IS OURS- a play about the Environment

written by Lenore Miller and students

SYNOPSIS: Aliens from a distant galaxy visit an Earth site in 3 time periods--present, past and future----observing people as they deal with the environment.

An arrowhead and a button tie the generations together as the aliens bring their wisdom and vision of a grim future to show children of the present what must be done to avoid that fate.

If you produce this play in any form (as is or modified), please notify the author, Lenore Miller 296 Arlene St. Staten Island NY 10314

PRODUCTION NOTES: Suitable for 3rd--6th grades. From 18-32 speaking parts plus sound, music, lighting effects. There are 4 scenic changes, but they can be simple or complex. PROPS- a Time-Space Machine, made from a sturdy refrigerator or plywood box, painted with dials and buttons.
Meeting scene- simple furniture, chairs, table.
Clean up scene-brooms, bags, rakes, litter;
Indian scene- tailored to geographic area, could be tepee, wigwam, fire;
Future scene- can use meeting scene but made "homey", add a soft chair, pictures.
OTHERS: arrowhead, colorful button, helmets
SOUND & LIGHT EFFECTS: for the time-space travel- shut all lights, use disco-type strobe flasher. Electronic sounds taped from computer games. Music can be added to create mood, especially somber future scene.
COSTUMES: Eykarians can wear tights, slippers, bathing caps, springy antennas. Indians can wear tribal clothes. Futurians can also wear tights and tunics. Motorcycle helmets needed for prop.

Time-space machine is placed in front of curtain to one side and remains there throughout. The only action needed is going in and out of it. A door may be made. A song about the environment can be added to provide a finale.(see addenda)

The number of Eykarians and pupils is flexible to allow everyone to have a speaking part. Grandma can become Grandpa in Indian and future scenes if more boys' parts are needed. However, note that whichever pupil finds the arrowhead must be given a name and addressed by that name in both clean up and future scenes to get the idea across that it is the same person. The date is also flexible; present scene should be this year's date...Great for 1990s' EARTH DAY celebrations!

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THE CHOICE IS OURS, a play about our Environment

written by Lenore Miller and students

NARRATOR: Class_____ presents THE CHOICE IS OURS, a play about our environment. Scene I takes place on the Planet EYKARE, in a distant galaxy, where intelligent life exists. The Eykarians are quite familiar with life on Earth because their civilization is more advanced than ours, and they have been watching our planet for as long time.

(ELECTRONIC MUSIC)

. . . . . .

(IN FRONT OF THE CURTAIN. TIME MACHINE IS BROUGHT OUT.)

EYKARIAN: Be careful! Don't damage it.

EYKARIAN #2: Isn't it beautiful!

EYKARIAN #3: I wonder how it works?

EYKARIAN #4: Here comes Dr. Z-10, the inventor.He'll explain it. Hello Dr. Z-10.

DR. Z-10: Hello, Eykarians. Well, I see my new machine has finally been assembled.

EYKARIAN: What does it do, Dr. Z-10, and how does it work?

DR.Z-10: It's a new time and space machine. It can go through vast distances in a wink. It travels 10 times faster than the speed of light. This is the space button (POINTS TO BUTTON). Just direct the compass to any galaxy, any planet, push the button and you're zooming toward your destination.

EYKARIAN:That's wonderful, Dr.Z-10. How does it go through time?

DR. Z-10:These are the time dials (POINTS). You turn the pointer to the millenium, century, decade and year you want to visit, press this button and you are carried backward or forward in time.

EYKARIAN: Remarkable invention! Can we try it?

DR.Z-10: Sure! Where would you like to go?

EYKARIAN: Well, I've been monitoring the Planet Earth on our video screen and it seems they haven't solved many of their problems yet. Perhaps we can go there. It's located in the Milky Way Galaxy.

DR.Z-10: Certainly. (TURNS COMPASS DIALS, WHILE MUTTERING ALOUD...)250 degrees northwest.....Now, pick a time.

EYKARIAN: I think the 20th century would be the most interesting; the beginning of the 90's could be the decade. Let's find a typical school, since school children are so typical. And I love children, especially the little Earthlings.

EYKARIAN:Wait! Won't they be frightened when they see us? They don't know we exist.

DR.Z-10: We can be visible or invisible as we choose. I have a de-materializer on board.

EYKARIAN: Then I think it best we remain invisible so we don't alarm the Earthlings.

DR. Z-10: Then it's decided; Earth, 199_, a typical school, invisible. Is everyone ready?

ALL: Ready!

DR. Z-10: Then hop aboard and we're off to the Milky Way Galaxy!

(ALL ENTER THE TIME MACHINE. LIGHTS, SOUND, MUSIC)

. . . . . .

NARRATOR: Quick as a wink, the time-space machine whisks the inhabitants through space and time to the Planet Earth. They have arrived at a typical school on a typical day, when a meeting is in progress. Scene II opens as the Eykarians, now invisible, look in on a meeting of students, parents, teachers and the principal as they are discussing a land clean-up project. (CURTAIN OPENS. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. GROUP IS SEATED AND STANDING AROUND TABLE. EYKARIANS EXTREME RIGHT STAGE).

PUPIL #1: I'm sure that many people will help us in our clean up.

PARENT: The parents will supply the tools. We need rakes, brooms, bags and heavy gloves.

PRINCIPAL: Let's be sure everyone is safe. Only adults should use sharp tools.

PUPIL #2: What if it rains? Will we go home for lunch?

PARENT: Don't worry about rain. Neighborhood stores have agreed to provide refreshments to keep up the energy of the workers.

TEACHER: Let's go down that list and see what has to be done. Land has to be cleared for our school garden. All the trash has to be taken away. Rocks must be moved. Since we'll be using part of the woods near the school as an outdoor classroom, trails will have to be made and covered with wood chips.

PUPIL #3: That reminds me of the pioneers and the Native American Indians we learned about in Social Studies.

TEACHER: Did you know that Native American Indians probably lived in this very area?

EYKARIAN(ASIDE):Indians???What tribes of Indians?

EYKARIAN #2: Sh. Let's listen closely. Maybe we can find out.

PUPIL #4: But that was almost 500 years ago, Mrs. Ross; we saw that on our museum trip. How would we know if any of them actually lived on this very land?

TEACHER: Maybe while we're having our clean up, we'll find some artifacts left by the Indians.

PARENT: It looks like we have a big job ahead of us, but if everyone pitches in, I think we can do it.

PRINCIPAL: I will call to make sure the Department of Sanitation will be here.

PUPIL #5: I'll ask my Cub Scout Troop Leader and my brother is a Boy Scout. I'm sure they will help us.

PUPIL #2: And so will the 4-H, Brownies and Girl Scouts.

PRINCIPAL: Our date is set; everyone has been notified; everything is ready. We'll see you all here tomorrow. (CURTAIN)

EYKARIAN: (IN FRONT OF CURTAIN) Let's get into our time and space machine and see if we can find out about the Native Americans who might have lived here.

EYKARIAN: Put the time dial back 50_ years, to 1490, before the Europeans came to the New World,

DR.Z-10: Be careful! Don't press the space button. We only want to go back in time. We don't want to change our space just yet. (GET INTO MACHINE)

EYKARIAN: O.K. Ready? Here we go !!!!!!!!(LIGHTS, SOUND, MUSIC)

. . . . . .

NARRATOR: Back, back, back in time...1890, 1790, 1690, 1590, 1490. The time machine comes to a stop as Scene III opens. Just as they thought, the Indians did live right on the very spot where the school will be. (CURTAIN. A NATIVE AMERICAN SCENE WITH TEPEE OR WIGWAM, FIRE, ETC.)

INDIAN MOTHER: Your father and brother should be home from hunting soon.

INDIAN GIRL: Yes, Mother. I will build up the fire so that we can cook the game they will be bringing.

MOTHER: Here they come now. (ENTER INDIAN FATHER AND SON)

FATHER: The hunting was good today, my wife. We caught a deer, 2 rabbits and some birds.

MOTHER: The land is rich with wildlife. The earth has been good to us, husband. We do not go hungry. there are always many animals to hunt.

SON: And the stream beyond the path has many delicious fish to catch whenever we want some. Its water is clean and fresh.

GIRL: Mother and I always find plenty of nuts, seeds, berries and leafy plants to gather for our meals.

SON: Was it always like this, Grandma?

GRANDMA: No, my grandson.

GIRL: Tell us about the ancient legends, Grandma.

GRANDMA: The legends of our people tell us that once the earth was dark and barren. The spirits of nature out water in the rivers and fish in the rivers; soil on the earth and plants to grow in the soil; trees in the forest and animals to live in the forest. When all was doen, the spirits put HUMANS among these things and told them to use the water, the soil, the plants and the animals to feed themselves, to drink, to build their homes and to clothes themselves. The nature spirits live within all of

nature's creations.

GIRL: Is this the way the land became so beautiful?

GRANDMA: Yes, my child.

FATHER: Yes, the land has been good to us. And we are good to the land too, for we know that it is necessary to live in harmony with nature. We never hunt more than we can eat, and we protect the trees and the water. In this way, we do not destroy our source of food and life. And my son, as you grow into a man and my daughter, as you grow into a woman, you will understand how to protect that which the spirits of nature have given us to care for.

SON: Yes, Father. I will understand.

MOTHER: Let us prepare this food for a feast. (CURTAIN)

EYKARIAN: So those were the Indians who lived here. They certainly understood how to live with nature.

EYKARIAN: Let's go forward again to 199_ and see how those schoolchildren are coming along with their clean up. (GET INTO MACHINE. NOISE, LIGHTS)

. . . . . .

NARRATOR: Once more, the machine whizzes through time and the Eykarians find themselves in 199_ as the land clean up is in progress. (CURTAIN)
(CHILDREN, PARENTS, TEACHER, PRINCIPAL...CLEANING UP WITH BROOMS, BAGS,ETC)

PUPIL #6: Look at all these bottles and cans. Why can't people throw their garbage in litter baskets?

PUPIL # 7: Give me a hand with this, please. It's heavy.

PUPIL #8: I'll take this end. O.K. Let's lift it.

PUPIL #2: Bring that rake over here.

PUPIL # 4: Here's a load of chips. Let's cover those exposed tree roots with them.
(AD LIB WORK)

PUPIL #7: I'm still wondering about the Native Americans; do you think we'll find any artifacts here?

PUPIL #5: I doubt it. Let's just work at making this area look nice. After all, we want to be able to come out here to study and enjoy the beauty. (AD LIB MORE WORK TALK)

PUPIL # 7: (BENDS DOWN)Look! I think this is an old Indian arrowhead. I wonder if it's real and who it belonged to.

EYKARIAN (ASIDE): We know, don't we. (CHUCKLES)

TEACHER: Well, boys and girls. here are the buttons to show you took part in the clean up (GIVES OUT BUTTONS). We all worked very hard, but I think you'll agree, it was wo th it.

PUPIL: And it was a lot of fun too.

PUPIL #7 Especially for me, because I found the arrowhead.

PUPIL #1: I can't wait until the flowers we planted bloom. It should really look beautiful. Right, Felicia?

FELICIA: I hope it stays beautiful forever. (CURTAIN)

EYKARIAN: Just think; Felicia hopes it will stay beautiful forever and we can take a look at the future, thanks to Dr. Z-10's amazing machine.

EYKARIAN: What are we waiting for? Let's go !!!!!!! (DIALS, LIGHTS,SOUND)

. . . . . .

NARRATOR: This time the machine goes forward into the future, 60 years, to the year 205_. With much curiosity, they await the scene that opens on the Earth just 60 years from now. (CURTAIN)
(THE CURTAIN OPENS SLOWLY ON A DARK AND SOMBER SCENE. TREES ARE BARE: NO LIGHT FROM THE SUN, ETC)

MOTHER: Tork, Veda!!!! Come here. We're almost out of water. Here's $10. Go to the store and buy 2 gallons of water.

BOY: Gee, Mom. Why don't you just turn on the faucet and get some there?

MOTHER: I'm sorry, Tork, We need <u>clean</u> water to drink. The water that comes out of the faucet is too dirty for drinking. We can use that water to wash our auto-helicopter, but that's about all.

FATHER: And while Tork and Veda are at the store, let them buy 4 more containers of air. I know they're very expensive, but the newspaper says there's been another bad oil spill. Many of the plants that give us oxygen live in our oceans, and may be unable to survive. I just hope the store still has some by the time you get there. (SOUND:BABY CRYING)

GIRL: And I'll also buy some more medicine for the baby. He just doesn't seem to be getting any better.

MOTHER (SIGHS): If only he could get a breath of fresh, real air sometime. (CHILDREN EXIT. MOTHER CALLS AFTER). Be sure to put on your air helmets. I don't want you breathing that dirty air.

GRANDMA: We should try to live somewhere else. It's too dirty here.

MOTHER: It's dirty everywhere, Mother Felicia.

FATHER: What's for dinner tonight?

MOTHER: I'm afraid that all I have is that artificial food. Ever since last year's crop failure, that's all we've been able to get. What I wouldn't give for some fresh fish, fruits and vegetables

GRANDMA: Maybe we could move to the country.

FATHER: There isn't any "country" any more. Remember when you were a kid and the world was green and lovely?

GRANDMA (SIGHS): Yes, I remember when I was a girl (TAKES OUT BUTTON). We had a chance to keep it that way, but we threw it away.

MOTHER: That wasn't so long ago. I wonder if it will ever be like those good old days????

FATHER: For our children's sake, I hope so. (CURTAIN, VERY SLOWLY)

EYKARIAN (VERY SOBER AND SERIOUS): Gee, whatever happened to the beautiful Earth?

EYKARIAN: I'm not sure. But whatever did happen, didn't happen overnight. Dr. Z-10, what do you think it was?

DR. Z-10: It seems to me that the Earthlings did not care enough about their world to protect it from harm. The people of the 20th century did not pay attention to the lessons of the Native Americans, to live in harmony with nature.

EYKARIAN: Well, we're smart. Can't we think of something we can do to change the future?

EYKARIAN: We can materialize and make ourselves visible to the 199_'s Earthlings. Perhaps if we can explain to them how important it is to take care of the Earth's resources, they will understand and change their ways.

EYKARIAN: It's worth a try. Let's go! (INTO MACHINE.MUSIC.LIGHTS,NOISE)

(CURTAIN OPENS. CLASS OR OUTDOOR SCENE)

PUPIL #1: (FRIGHTENED) Who are you?

PUPIL #2: What do you want?

EYKARIAN: Do not be afraid Earthlings. We come in peace and to help you.

EYKARIAN: We know you worked very hard on your land restoration project and you hope it can remain beautiful forever. We are here to warn you that the future does not look bright. By means of our special time machine, we went ahead 60 years and we saw the Earth in a sorry state. The Earth was so severely polluted that the air was unfit to breathe. The water was not drinkable and there was barely enough food to go around.

PUPIL: That's terrible. Is there anything we can do to change the future?

PUPIL: Must it be that way? Don't we have any control over the future of the Earth's resources?

DR. Z-10: The only hope lies with you, young Earthlings. You must convince the others that it is everyone's job to protect the Earth and all its resources.. ...the soil, the water, the trees, the air, so that the Earth can keep on providing you with what you need to survive.

EYKARIAN: And you must start **now**!

PUPIL #7: That sounds like a Native American Indian's advice. Maybe my arrowhead is a sign from the past to tell us to protect the future.

DR.Z-10: Keep that as a reminder. Whenever you forget about the Earth, just look at the arrowhead. It will remind you that people and nature, can and must live together.

TEACHER: Thank you all for your warning. We shall listen to your words of wisdom.

DR. Z-10: And now we must leave for our own planet. Goodbye Earthlings. Take care of your precious Earth.

ALL: Goodbye. (EYKARIANS LEAVE IN MACHINE. ALL WAVE. CURTAIN)